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FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9958
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT 4133
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA 0346
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1109
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 4748
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0613
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0472
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 0630
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 4339
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 2631
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0652
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 7491
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1288
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2602
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC 0198
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC 0047

UNCLAS TASHKENT 000787

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR G/TIP MEGAN HALL; SCA FOR JESSICA MAZZONE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [PHUM](#) [UZ](#)

SUBJECT: UZBEK GOVERNMENT REPORTS CONVICTION IN TRAFFICKING CASE

¶1. (U) A major state-run newspaper, Xalq Sozi (People's Word), ran a prominent 800-word article on July 1 reporting that a ring of Uzbek nationals was arrested for trafficking at least two Uzbek women to China with false employment offers. An Uzbek national, Aleksandr Rudenko, who worked in China, colluded with two female Uzbek citizens to recruit girls with the promise of secretarial jobs in Beijing for a purported salary of USD 600 per month. The article noted that two Uzbek women were trafficked and subsequently sexually exploited in China, but "somehow, they managed to escape and report to police." The article also reported that "the criminal group's members were detained and sentenced to long prison terms."

¶2. (U) Nodira Karimova, prominent anti-TIP activist and Director of the NGO "Istiqbolli Avlod," told poloff that the arrests were made in 2007 and the article corresponded with the convictions. Istiqbolli Avlod assisted the two TIP victims in the story, she said, and she believes the male was sentenced to six years in jail while the female accomplices received punishments of three years each. An attorney from Istiqbolli Avlod also helped represent the victims and contributed to the investigation.

Comment:

¶3. (U) This story reflects a continuing trend of TIP incidents being openly reported in the tightly-controlled Uzbek media. The Government of Uzbekistan is encouraged by its improvement on the 2008 TIP Report ranking to the Tier 2 Watchlist, and it doubtless wants to be sure that it gets credit for successful law enforcement efforts to bust TIP rings. Publishing articles about the incident in the state-run press also helps to raise awareness about the problem and warn potential traffickers that Uzbekistan now means business in combating TIP crimes.

NORLAND